Death Only Escape for JFK Plotters: Garrison

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison says death is the only escape for those he believes plotted to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

"The only way they are going to get away from us," Garrison said yesterday, "is to kill themselves."

Garrison's statement to newsmen apparently was a reference to the death of David W. Ferrie, a man Garrison tagged as a prime witness in his controversial probe.

The district attorney seemed undaunted by evidence reported by the coroner, Dr. Nicholas Chetta, who said the chemical analysis of Ferrie's body showed "no evidence whatsoever of suicide or murder."

MOREOVER, Garrison claimed his staff solved the assassination case weeks ago.

"I wouldn't say this if we didn't have evidence beyond the shadow of a doubt," he added. "We know the key individuals, the cities involved and how it was done."

That was the first time the word "solved" had been used by Garrison.

But he said this did not mean arrests were imminent, that he merely used a different word to state what he had said earlier: Arrests will be made and convictions obtained.

ARRESTS might be months away, said Garrison, adding in the exaggerated style he has adopted in daily exchanges with newsmen, "It might be 30 years."

The investigation was made public when a New Orleans newspaper obtained — from public records — a list of agents, trips they made, and the money spent in seeking clues. Garrison has said the published reports have hampered his investigation.

Now Garrison's staff is armed with a private bankroll disclosed yesterday at a luncheon to which 50 New Orleans businessmen had been invited. The group, taking the name "Truth and Consequences," promised the district attorney funds which could amount to $50,000 a month or more.

THE private fund will enable Garrison to dispatch investigators to any place he desires without resorting to public monies, thereby revealing the momentum of the probe.

"This was done to express our confidence in our district attorney and to state we will have full confidence in his ability, his integrity, and the integrity of his office," said Joseph Rault Jr., one of three businessmen instrumental in organizing the support.